(b) the entire gas presently estimated to become available in the K-G basin has already been committed to other consumers

Black-marketing of Tickets in Karnataka

6471: SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI Will the Minister of RAILWAYS pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of black-marketing of railway tickets are on the increase in the country;

(b) if so, the number of such cases that came to notice in Karnataka during the last two year; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to check this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) No, Sir. However, some cases have come to notice from time to time.

(b) As a result of raids by Southern Railway Vigilance, 1137 touts were booked. This includes 41 unauthorised travel agencies also. Out of these, 19 touts have been apprehended in Bangalore.

(c) Some of the steps taken to curb such unhealthy practices are as under :—

i) Surprise checks/raids are conducted by the Railways in coordination with the local police, wherever necessary.

ii) Under the Railways Act, 1989, the punishment for touts and passengers who travel on unauthorised tickets has been substantially increased.

iii) Public are educated/exhorted through Press, T.V., Posters etc.; not to buy tickets from touts/unauthorised sources.

iv) Special concerted drives to check black-marketing in Railway tickets are also undertaken at least twice a year during summer rush holidays and the Pooja/Dussehra/Diwali periods.

Restoration of Train between Palghat and Shoranur

6472. SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the passenger trains running between Palghat and Shoranur (Southern Railway) have been cancelled for the last few month;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to restore these trains; and

(d) if so, when?

THE MINSTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Due to lack of commercial justification.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Air Services Between Bombay and Kuwait

6473. SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any